(Protection) Act, diversion of any habitat for non-forestry purposes is prohibited. Further, Supreme Court has directed in Writ Petition No. 202/1995 that no felling of trees and removal of grass should be done in the area notified as Wildlife Sanctuary. In view of the facts mentioned above, Ministry of Environment & Forests, after detailed examination, have allowed the Sabarimala Trust for permissive use of areas along Pamba-Sannidhanam road for pitching the tents for visitors. No felling of trees and removal of vegetation is permissible for the purpose. Supreme Court in recent hearing has directed the Ministry to ensure that the forest land is restored to its original condition after the end of the Yatra Season. Kerala Government has been requested to plan the other facilities outside the Sanctuary.

Illegal zoos

2787. SHRI KA. RA. SUBBIAN: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased "to state:

(a) the details of illegal zoos in Tamil Nadu and other parts of the country since January, 2001;

(b) whether an illegal zoo near Mumbai came to light last year; and

(c) the action taken against those running illegal zoos and against those who keep endangered black buck, in violation of the Convention of International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) and the Wild Life Protection Act, 1972?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) Tamil Nadu Government has reported that 3 illegal zoos that were operating in the State have been closed and the animals in their possession have been confiscated and sent to Aringar Anna Zoological Park, Vandalur. Another zoo which was operating without the recognition of the Central Zoo Authority in Solan, Himachal Pradesh has also been asked to close down. Chief Wildlife Warden of the State has been asked to take charge of the animals of this zoo.

(b) and (c) During last year, some illegally kept wild animals were seized by the enforcement authorities from Aayush Resort, Panvel,

District Raigad near Mumbai. Chargesheets against the offenders have been filed in the Court by Maharashtra State Forest Department.

Banning Genetically Modified Seeds

† 2788. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:
SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN':

Will the Minister-of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the federation of some farmers organizations has submitted a memorandum to Government, requesting to ban the sale and use of genetically modified seeds in the country for the next five years, till the farmers of the country are pepared for it;

(b) whether France, Austria, Denmark, Luxemburg and Greece have banned the use of Bt. Cotton and genome developed seeds;

(c) if so, whether Government have taken any decision in the matter so far; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) Some Farmers Unions have submitted a memorandum to the Government requesting that no commercial release of GM crops should be made until capacity of farmers is built on biosafety issues.

(b) Countries like France, Austria, Luxemburg and Denmark do not grow cotton and therefore banning Bt. cotton in these countries is not much of significance. Genetically modified corn is being grown in France as reported by the International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-biotech Applications (ISA A A). A few individual states of the European Commission have a ban on individual GM products.

(c) and (d) The Government is following a policy of case by case approval of transgenic crops. Introduction of any new technologic

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.